

ROUND TABLE MEETING SUMMARY

A SUSTAINABLE VISION FOR WASHINGTON'S SOLID WASTE SYSTEM

MEETING 3 May 14, 2001

S P O K A N E - E A S T R E G I O N

What is the Round Table Meeting Series?

The "Sustainable Vision for Washington State's Solid Waste System" round table meeting series (March-June 2001) brings community, business, and government together to identify coordinated approaches to solid waste issues. Diverse perspectives have been raised during these meetings. The outcomes of the meeting series are recommendations from each of the four regions for use in determining the priority issues and action alternatives that will be included in the state solid waste plan revision. Issues, goals, and strategies, in common within regions and across the state, will be noted in these recommendations, along with those that are unique to a region. All interested residents throughout the state are encouraged to join these regional dialogues during the remaining June meetings regardless of whether or not you participated in earlier meetings.

SUMMARY OF MEETING 3

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of Meeting 3 was for participants to identify strategies or specific actions that would best accomplish the "milestones" (interim goals with deadlines) identified in Meeting 2. These strategies provide the foundation for Ecology's further exploration of alternatives to assist in moving toward a more effective and a more sustainable solid waste system, both in the long-term and the short-term. In addition, participants reviewed a draft vision for the state solid waste plan and provided feedback for a revised vision that incorporates participants' views from all three round table meetings.

PROCESS TO DATE

Cheryl Strange, project manager for the state plan, explained that Ecology began working on a revision to the State Solid Waste Plan with the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and a number of stakeholders in early 2000. Work groups developed issue papers, which serve as the foundation for the Round Table discussions. The full text of the issue papers can be found in the document entitled "Issues Identification: Issues for Consideration and Discussion" #01-07-001 on the project website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/swplan>.

The Round Table Meeting Series, March - June 2001, is the public review and input process for this stage of the state solid waste plan revision. This is the time to identify what is needed to create a state solid waste plan that will have support from the diverse communities that will be asked to participate in implementation activities. The plan recommendations are not written at this time; there is no drafted language to review and comment on. The regional recommendations drafted at the round tables will provide a foundation for the next phase of developing action alternatives for consideration, which will follow the round tables in the summer of 2001. Public review and input on the plan options and recommendations will be held next year and the draft plan will then be written.

SMALL GROUP EXERCISES

Participants were asked to identify specific actions or strategies they think would best accomplish the milestones identified in the region at Meeting 2. Participants worked as individuals to brainstorm strategies for the milestones they considered most important for the region in both the long term and to meet today's needs. These strategies were posted on worksheets reflecting breakout group perspectives.

Participants were encouraged to explore solid waste strategies from a variety of perspectives, and to choose one of the following group worksheets to post their strategies on: Government; Solid Waste Industry; Business; Environment; and Community and Civic Groups. These breakout groups were not considered to be representative voices for each of these groupings; rather, the groupings were made for the purposes of providing participants the opportunity to express various perspectives on solid waste issues.

During a second exercise, participants worked at small round tables comprised of people from each breakout group. Milestones and strategies of most importance were discussed and additional strategies were generated. Meeting participants also reviewed the draft vision statement and provided additional feedback for use in developing a regionally recommended vision for the state solid waste plan.

In this summary regional feedback on a draft vision for the state solid waste plan has been compiled from each of the three round table meetings and developed into a draft vision from that region. The strategies from all breakout groups have been merged beneath the milestone topic heading under which they were posted. The strategies were grouped within similar approaches by the neutral meeting facilitators, not the participants. The draft vision and strategies from Meeting 3 are contained in the sections of the summary below.

NEXT STEPS

In June, round table meeting participants will review the region's round table participants' contributions to a draft vision and the milestones and strategies to accomplish that vision. Participants will engage in a facilitated exploration of support for the draft vision, and common perspectives on key milestones and strategies. The elements in common, along with all milestones and strategies, will become the regional recommendation for Ecology's consideration in the state solid waste plan revision. You are encouraged to attend and to share your perspectives on a sustainable future for solid waste in your region.

Below is a draft vision reaching beyond a 20 year timeline for the state solid waste plan. It has been tailored to include feedback received from the first three East Region round table meetings. Participants will be asked in Meeting 4 to offer their feedback on this regionally tailored vision. The original draft version published in the 'Issues Identification' document can be viewed on the project website at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/swplan>.

DRAFT EASTERN REGIONAL VISION STATEMENT FOR STATE SOLID WASTE PLAN

A sustainable economic system exists, reflecting the state's regionally unique characteristics, and is based on waste reduction, material reuse, resource and energy conservation, and pollution prevention. The sustainable system for solid waste in Washington State engages all residents in balancing the economic, environmental, and social needs of their regions. Existing resources are maximized to support a sustainable approach to protecting the environment and human health and promoting economic development.

Businesses balance material and energy use with practices that reinvest in environmental capital, recognizing that such stewardship is the basis for their survival and profit. Manufacturers share responsibility for their product and packaging wastes. Product stewardship is addressed in a realistic manner, given the unique challenges for rural communities. Material reuse and recycling infrastructures have been developed and stable financial support for the costs of transportation exist.

Individuals recognize their role in achieving and maintaining sustainability as inhabitants and consumers. Consumers demand, are provided with, and choose goods and services with the lowest life-cycle impacts on energy and materials use. The costs of these choices are socially equitable.

Government economic development policies provide incentives to businesses and industry to achieve and maintain sustainability. State and local solid waste planning is coordinated; addresses local needs; and mandates sufficient funding. Local jurisdictions are empowered to address the unique challenges of their region.

Communities advocate for economic, environmental, and social equity in solid waste planning and implementation. Local systems are sustained that support development within the limits of the environmental carrying capacity of the region.



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EAST STRATEGIES AND MILESTONES LISTED BY TOPIC

The following table contains all Strategies from Meeting 3, which are grouped under the Milestone topic headings where participants posted them. Below the Milestone topic heading is a brief summary statement that consists of milestone themes summarized by the facilitators. Participants were assured that these summary statements are not intended to reflect every milestone posted under that topic heading and that the placement of strategies under these statements does not indicate support for all elements of the statements.

The Strategies from Meeting 3 are grouped under sub headings that capture the themes of the actions recommended to achieve the milestones. The summary is in order of importance, as indicated by participants at Meetings 2 and 3. Each Strategy indicates the initial of the sector breakout group in which it was created. The initials for the sector breakout groups stand for the following:

- (B) - Business
- (E) - Environment
- (G) - Government
- (SW) - Solid Waste Industry
- (CC) - Community & Civic Groups

Milestone Topic: CHANGING BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years consistent educational programming and advertisement will inform the general public, school age to adult, of the social, economic, and environmental value of recycling, and making less waste. Consumers will utilize product or manufacturer sustainable performance measures in their purchasing decisions. And consumer and public officials will understand how waste management issues are related to growth and consumer habits.

STRATEGIES

Financial Incentives and Disincentives

- Change attitudes - increase recycling and reduce waste is contradictory. Remove false subsidies for recycling. Garbage and recycling cost more than waste prevention (SW)

Materials Processing and Management

- Database of reusable recycled content materials available in community (G)

Procurement

- Schools and other public facilities should use only organic / non- toxic products for cleaning, landscaping, and fertilization and pest control, etc. thereby demonstrating to employees, students, and the public how non-toxic alternatives are functional, preferable, and affordable. (E)

Regulatory Action

- This is the MOST important! Ecology staff should teach more classes open to the public. Schools should have environmental clubs and mandated recycling programs. Community events must be used as means to educate the public about the impacts of solid and hazardous waste. (CC)

Resource Conservation

- Our solid waste plan shall encourage the sharing of as many goods as possible. Bicycles, radios, vacuums, washing machines, clothing, automobiles and many other items can decrease in volume as they are shared between community members (E)

Education

- Teach backyard composting to every citizen of the state (CC)
- Education outreach programs targeted to elementary school, several grade levels, with take home materials (G)
- Ecology will work with major universities in the state to develop and teach classes to all architect and engineering majors on sustainable building practices (CC)
- General population must emotionally and actively buy into the process. How? Wish I could do this. Education at all levels (SW)
- Work with private organizations to educate citizens so that there is a one to one education process (E)
- Local school districts allow and invite industry representation into classrooms to educate how environmental issues effect industry and therefore effect local economy, environment and citizens (E)

Milestone Topic: RECYCLING (Issue Paper 11)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Government agency involvement in recycling will increase and utilize proper methods before enforcement of recycling. Within ten years recycling services will be available in 90 percent of the state, and drop off centers will be available within reasonable distances in all rural areas, this will increase to 100 percent in thirty years. Industry will participate in recycling through labeling that indicates recycling content and environmental impacts. Within thirty years state agency policy will require employees to utilize practices that reduce, reuse, and recycle all materials in the office, and purchasing guidelines will be set for use of maximum recycled content. In this thirty-year period we will see 75 percent of all solid waste materials reused or recycled into a useful product via some collection and recovery system.

STRATEGIES

Procurement

- Implement procurement policies at all levels of government, including school districts, etc (G)

Funding for Government Programs

- Continued secured state funding stop taking from the UTC for other programs, i.e. meth lab clean ups (G)
- State funding should allow replacing capital purchases from previous grants (G)

Taxes

- Tax landfills to support recycling and energy recovery (G)

Regulatory Action

- All government buildings over 100 employees will be required to implement some type of food waste recycling programs (CC)
- Ban on products and packaging that cannot be reused, repaired, recycled, or composted (E)
- Regulation of recycling that prohibits the recycling of toxic materials in ways that result in environmental exposure such as is currently being done with incinerator ash (E)
- Eventually prohibit manufacturing of materials that adversely affect the health of the environment (E)

New Data and Measurement Tools

- A new waste characterization study should be conducted by Ecology to determine fully what wastes exist and what options for reuse exist, not just for municipal solid waste, but ALL wastes (CC)

Education

- Educate - people don't recycle properly making recyclable products garbage (SW)

Financial Incentives and Disincentives

- Take monies away from government agencies when they don't recycle (SW)
- Government taxation of businesses and manufacturers who do not comply with packaging recycling criteria (E)

Milestone Topic: RECYCLING MARKET DEVELOPMENT (Issue Paper 11)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years market development efforts will be expanded and targeted toward long -term use of recycled materials. Investments will be made in resource conservation and recycling and re-use based businesses. In addition economic development policies and strategies will be developed to support recycling market development.

STRATEGIES

Incentives and Disincentives

- Change in state law to allow tax incentives, etc. for recycle reuse business (G)
- Incentives to lure markets to a more local level to reduce transportation costs (G)

Market Development by Government

- Put as much effort into developing markets as has been placed on other market building by the government (G)

Procurement Standards

- All state and local government will adopt permanent standards such as federal government executive order in Clinton administration requiring high levels of recycled content and material purchases - buy recycled (CC)

Comments and Concerns

- This would represent a complete paradigm shift in recycling from the current ineffective token effort and weak over-saturated market to a strong, meaningful one (E)

Milestone Topic: COMPLETE COSTS OF SOLID WASTE (Issue Paper 10)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: "True cost," means accounting for all of the costs of solid waste decisions. Within the next ten years program incentives will be in place so that the cost of waste disposal of products begins to be included in the price of products. In addition, "planned obsolescence" will be reduced. And a significant number of public agencies and businesses will adopt "true cost" and life cycle assessments into practice.

STRATEGIES

Full Cost Accounting

- Redefine true cost of solid waste decisions, get additional representatives from solid waste industry and private business (SW)
- Do an assessment on the true costs of disposal and recycling programs as they now exist, then what may be achieved with some change and at what costs (SW)

Taxes

- Legislation to tax products based on waste disposal costs tax passed to consumers so disposal cost is in product (G)

Producer Responsibility

- Business / government responsibility for upstream and downstream costs of manufacturing - citizenry should no longer bear the burden financially of waste disposal in regard to environment, health, and welfare, particularly as related to incineration (E)

Materials Processing and Management

- Solid waste disposal facilities public or private must have tipping fee cover all costs of the solid and hazardous waste program costs. This will show the public the true costs of disposal versus recycling (CC)

Consumer Demand

- Consumer incentives need to be implemented that provide financial motivation for purchasing products which are not damaging to the environment or depleting of resources (E)

Comments and Concerns

- Actual/Complete costs of solid waste differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, public and private and not productive to do. Many ways to account for lifecycle costs (G)
- Identify critical 'must do' things to get done, i.e. eliminate all glass or use only clear glass for example - if glass goals are not reached is public willing to subsidize costs for 'the greater good of all' (G)

Milestone Topic: LANDFILLING AND INCINERATION (Issue Paper 9)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years 100 percent of landfills will be assessed, closed as required by regulations, and cleaned up. Waste diversion efforts will prioritize energy generation over landfilling, with certain materials considered banned from landfills. And landfills will be 'mined' for reuse of materials.

STRATEGIES

Full Cost Accounting

- With power problem that we have evaluate landfill and incineration, may be more cost effective than recycling (SW)
- Incineration and energy recovery will not happen until landfill costs vs. waste to energy costs are closer, grants for capital or landfill regulation tax will change conditions (G)

Regulatory Action

- Enforce deconstruction of re-useable building materials (E)
- Implement a state wide flow control ordinance / law effectively immediately within one year - how - put in plan (G)
- Close illegal landfills have EPA and Ecology enforce regulations (G)

Materials Processing and Management

- Build a zero waste facility in Spokane (E)

Incineration

- With public health as the justification, the Spokane incinerator shall be immediately taken out of commission with appropriate legal action if necessary to prevent undue financial harm to tax payers (E)

Incentives and Disincentives

- End hidden subsidies for wasting such as fees on property owners to subsidize incinerators (E)
- Institutionalize 'pay as you throw' trash fees (E)

Comments and Concerns

- Incineration and energy recovery will not happen until landfill costs vs. wastes to energy costs are closer, grants for capital or landfill regulation tax will change conditions (G)
- Landfill mining dangerous and not practical landfills will always be needed (G)

Milestone Topic: FUNDING FOR GOVERNMENT SOLID WASTE PROGRAMS (Issue Paper 4)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years funding for landfill closures and current capital equipment will be shifted from tipping fees and waste generation systems to a more secure source. Flow control issues will also be addressed to increase funding security.

STRATEGIES

Grants

- Change in CPG rules to allow replacement equipment and operational costs, less restrictions on money use (G)

Taxes

- Legislation taxing products based on disposal needs and the money returned to local governments to fund their programs (G)

Materials Processing and Management

- Major funding funnel to building a zero waste facility that will then be used by private businesses to reuse refuse (E)

Milestone Topic: ELIMINATION OF WASTE

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years the community leadership will provide information on how to achieve zero waste and have a plan for achieving it. Within the next thirty years business and government will implement zero waste infrastructure systems.

STRATEGIES

Regulatory Action

- We need packaging reduction guidelines like the Netherlands packaging covenant, Canadian National Packaging Protocol, or Germany's mandatory packaging ordinance that has resulted in 13% drop in per capita consumption of packaging from 1992- 1997 (E)

Materials Processing and Management

- All cities over 30, 000 population must have a zero waste facility where all materials are screened and separated for multiple reuse/recycling avenues (CC)
- Elimination possible if waste to energy used with ash recycling, just costs money, Japan, Europe, Nashville, Chicago (G)
- Create dialogue with other communities also attempting 'zero waste' (Santa Cruz, CA is one we could work with) (E)
- Research zero waste infrastructure systems that are already working, see how they got there (E)

Education

- Tell people and begin educating people the citizenry about what is in store for the future of zero waste right now - today (CC)

Comments and Concerns

- Not going to happen, cannot be achieved in local Washington State (G)
- Not realistic to expect 100% (G)
- Recycling will happen due to money (G)

Milestone Topic: PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP (Issue Paper 7)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years reused / recycled materials will increasingly provide the needed resources for product production. Closed loop production and other product stewardship practices will be used for 50 percent of products, involving 50 - 70 percent of the business sector. Within the next sixty years re-used/ recycled materials will provide 50 - 70 percent of resources for product production and remain in the production or organics cycle.

STRATEGIES

Incentives and Disincentives

- Need economic incentive before any significant amount consistently will be reduced (G)
- Incentives to business to reuse their old products in remanufacturing (could be financial, regulatory incentives, etc) (G)

Producer Responsibility

- Place more responsibility on producers of manufactured goods to deal with them once consumer is through, i.e. owner of a _____ gives it back to manufacturer when done, as in Japan (E)

Milestone Topic: CONSUMER AND INDUSTRY INCENTIVES

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years financial incentives will exist that target both consumers and industry that participate in recycling, conservation, and pollution reduction efforts. In addition, subsidies for virgin material extraction will be eliminated.

STRATEGIES

Remove Subsidies

- The legislature will vote to eliminate all subsidies for virgin materials extraction such as logging and mining, including any and all tax breaks, to give the incentive to using recycled materials (CC)

Taxes

- Impose heavy taxes on all virgin materials extracted from our bio-region and possibly for those imported into our bio-region (E)

Incentives and Disincentives

- Larger increments between service levels, double costs for 2 cans as one, etc (G)

Consumer Demand

- Rather than introducing a law, put money into an advertising campaign that will teach the necessity of reuse materials thus putting pressure on industry to conform (G)

Comments and Concerns

- State programs to provide incentives or punishment for not complying need to be implemented (G)

Milestone Topic: ROLES AND AUTHORITIES (Issue Paper 2)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next year appropriate rules and regulations to be in place for all items listed under solid waste, with different rules for different areas. Regions will be defined appropriately. In addition, there will be legislative authority and autonomy to solve local problems.

STRATEGIES

Stakeholder Involvement

- Since our area has an incinerator (without public participation consent) the public should have clear education and voting opportunities (E)

Comments and Concerns

- State - prioritize, local - implementation; state incentive taxes credits, disincentives regulations (G)
- Appropriate rules must be determined by people affected in a region and they need to know the effect of those rules on the economy, lifestyle and environment (E)

Milestone Topic: WASTE DISPOSAL REDUCTION (Issue Paper 5)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years the waste exchange and re-utilization opportunities that currently exist will be utilized to achieve a 40 percent increase in solid waste diverted. Within the ten- year period, waste disposal will go down by 75 percent. In addition, new systems will be explored, including discard malls" with space leased to provide sector tenants (similar to the systems in airports).

STRATEGIES

Materials Processing and Management

- All solid waste disposal facilities will have 'waste screening' as a first stop when receiving waste to further separate for reuse or recycling all possible multiple materials (CC)
- Store toxic materials until a responsible method for disposal is understood, businesses that are responsible for toxic products (both pre-existing and new) should bear the burden of cost (E)

Regulatory Action

- Close private landfills!!! Burning garbage in burn barrels is NOT recycling (SW)

Producer Responsibility

- If industry is to remain self regulating to the degree it currently is, materials that cannot be recycled must be borne by the industry (E)
- Store toxic materials until a responsible method for disposal is understood, businesses that are responsible for toxic products (both pre-existing and new) should bear the burden of cost (E)

Comments and Concerns

- Waste reduction by numbers listed in narrative not possible until system dramatically is changed (G)
- 40 % - 75% is not realistic to achieve in this time frame (SW)
- Close private landfills!!! Burning garbage in burn barrels is NOT recycling (SW)

Milestone Topic: REDUCTION OF TOXINS IN MANUFACTURED GOODS

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within in the next fifteen years toxins in products and waste will be reduced by 50 percent. And in the next thirty years incentives will promote 75 percent of manufacturers to use recycled or high-recycled content products, which have reduced toxins in their designs.

STRATEGIES

Incentives and Disincentives

- Regulatory approach and or tax consequences (G)
- Incentives rewarding beneficial development and enforced taxation for non-compliance (CC)

Regulatory Action

- Enforce tougher standards for what types of substances may be used for yard / garden care so that organic waste (compost) is safe for many uses (E)
- Phase out the use of chlorine in all industries allow only chlorine free paper in the next several years (E)

Incineration

- Toxins are part of garbage, incineration to destroy toxins, do not store (G)

Research

- Research on ways of reducing toxins or making products less toxic (SW)

Full Cost Accounting

- Factor in the costs of health effects caused by toxins / toxicants when doing cost analyses, i.e. dioxin - cancer, creates greater healthcare costs (E)

Comments and Concerns

- Clearly define what levels we are willing to live with as 'good enough' and are limits scientifically, economically, and logically feasible (G)
- How will we make global change to affect our state (SW)

Milestone Topic: WASTE PREVENTION (Issue Paper 6)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years waste prevention policies and practices will exist that reduce planned obsolescence and promote the reutilization of a variety of materials, including construction and manufacturing.

STRATEGIES

Incentives and Disincentives

- Tax incentives for green sustainable developments (E)

Partnerships

- A direct appeal should be made immediately to all architects and engineers in exploring future solutions regarding the building industry (E)

Education

- Showcase construction projects such as straw bale houses, cob cells, recycled materials, etc which generate little or no waste in construction and or use (E)

Comments and Concerns

- Prevention will happen if economics make sense (G)

Milestone Topic: WASTE GENERATION

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years waste generation will be reduced significantly. Within thirty years a 90 percent reduction level will be reached.

STRATEGIES

Regulatory Action

- End incineration in a transitional program to zero waste (CC)

Incentives and Disincentives

- Households pay by the number and type of waste thereby encouraging waste stream economy in the home (E)

Comments and Concerns

- Assume increase generation based on last 50 year history, we need more garbage in order to do recycling (G)

Milestone Topic: LOCAL COORDINATION

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next year municipal partnerships will be created to maximize jurisdictional cooperation, save money, and increase responsiveness. Rules to make those partnerships exist will be simplified so that when plans are updated an amendment is adopted. In addition, county SWACS will set up citizen communities all over the state to involve the public in planning and implementation.

STRATEGIES

Partnerships

- Ecology will work with local government to strengthen the role of local SWACS to insure public participation (CC)

Comments and Concerns

- Develop holistic resource management systems to create efficient use of resources - virgin resources should be the last option (E)

Milestone Topic: RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within the next ten years incentives will exist that promote research and development efforts to address the expansion of the infrastructure so it is capable of taking current waste products and making them into usable products. In addition, market research will be conducted to explore grants or tax breaks for these types of businesses in the short-run.

STRATEGIES

Remove Subsidies

- Development of markets free of government subsidies if we create a false economy in recycling and diversion it will not sustain itself (G)

Technological Solutions

- R & D necessary, create opportunities, solve problems with technology (G)
- Tax money designated for this research (G)